

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

pump, which weighed 13 pounds, was marginal.

With yet another helicopter out of action, Vaught asked Kyle and commando leader Col. Charlie Beckwith to consider continuing the mission with just five choppers. There were two ways of doing that: they could leave behind some 6,000 pounds of men and matériel, or they could try to load everything onto the already overlaid remaining choppers. Neither alternative was acceptable, and Kyle and Beckwith decided the mission should be scrubbed. Their recommendation was accepted by President Carter. But the team hadn't rehearsed an abort—and the lack of training may have contributed to the final tragedy. "We had never practiced to abort and get on the C-130s," Beckwith said later.

Two of the six C-130s had already taken off when disaster struck. But before the third could taxi to its takeoff position, a helicopter directly behind it had to be moved. The chopper's pilot, Maj. James Shaefer, was ordered to bank left and away from the C-130 and fly to a refueling position behind another of the transport planes. Shaefer acknowledged the order and started to bank left. Then he apparently became disoriented. He reversed his course, banked right and crashed into the C-130. Both craft burst into flames.

Overruled: The intense heat thrown off by the burning C-130 forced the crews of the two helicopters nearest the crash to abandon ship. One crewman wanted to go back to his chopper to retrieve classified material that had been left behind, but Kyle said no. When the last of the C-130s was airborne, Kyle asked Vaught to send in fighter planes to destroy the abandoned choppers and their classified contents. But Washington denied the request on the

ground that if any Iranians near the site—such as the passengers of the bus that had been stopped—were killed in the process, the militants in Teheran might take reprisals against the hostages. It was the only time since planning for the mission had begun that Washington had overruled a military recommendation.

In hindsight, it is easy to say that the mission planners should have sent ten helicopters instead of eight, that they should have known about the duration of *haboobs* and briefed the pilots accordingly, that they should have trained for an abort, that they should have taken an extra hydraulic pump to Desert One. But with the exception of the lack of planning for an abort, each of those decisions represented a reasonable trade-off between the need for maximum flexibility on the one hand and speed and secrecy on the other. "There had to have been some mistakes made," concedes Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Thomas Hayward. But in the end, the mission was done in at least as much by an incredible streak of bad luck.

A broader and more troubling question is whether the mission should have been undertaken in the first place. Pentagon planners were never certain how many militants the commandos were likely to encounter at the embassy. The attack force had no secret weapons: the operation would almost certainly have involved a fierce shoot-out. The Pentagon estimated that even if the commandos had made it to the embassy compound undetected, as many as fifteen of the hostages—and up to 30 of the commandos—would have been killed or injured in the getaway. Thus, there was a chance that only 38 hostages would have been rescued safely—at a cost of 45 casualties. In a mission that involved a series of uneasy compromises, that might have been the most disturbing trade-off of all.



Church on the stump: Spiraling acrimony

Endangered

Republicans have their best chance in years of capturing the U.S. Senate. A net shift of only ten seats in November could give them control—and more than a dozen Democratic senators face tough re-election campaigns. Conservatives have chosen five liberals as special targets: Birch Bayh of Indiana, Frank Church of Idaho, Alan Cranston of California, John Culver of Iowa, and George McGovern of South Dakota. NEWSWEEK's John J. Lindsay toured Idaho to assess the odds against Church, and Pamela Ellis Simons visited Iowa to scout the campaign against Culver. Their reports:

Frank Church and his Republican opponent, U.S. Rep. Steven Symms, came face to face at a rain-soaked fishermen's breakfast near St. Anthony, Idaho—and the soggy amiability of their encounter belied the spiraling acrimony of this year's Senate campaign. To Symms and his sympathizers on the right, Church is an apostle of "appeasement," a "dangerous man" and a "liar." To Church, the New Right itself is increasingly the issue—particularly the campaign being waged against him by the ABC (Anybody But Church) committee and its Washington parent group, the National Conservative Political Action Committee (NCPAC). "Symms and the ABC and NCPAC have been linked to one common objective—to attack Frank Church," he complains. Slightly ahead in the polls but on the defensive nonetheless, Church, 55, must hope that ABC's attacks will boomerang; his fifth Senate term—and chairmanship of the Foreign Relations Committee—may depend on it.

ABC and NCPAC resolutely deny any connection with the Symms campaign—

Chopper pilot Schaefer arrives home for burn treatment: No evacuation plan

Steve Krauss—Sygma





© Bob DeLashmott—Twin Falls Times-News

a battle with the well-organized New Right

Liberals

a legalism that permits them, under Federal election law, to spend as much as they can raise to defeat Church. But NCPAC's director, John Dolan, candidly confirms Church's contention that his group's strategy at least dovetails with Symms's. NCPAC, he says, "will concentrate on the negative stuff," leaving Symms to campaign above the fray. So far, ABC and NCPAC have raised at least \$130,000 (Church operatives claim the total is much higher) to attack Church's record; one ABC-sponsored speaker, a former head of the Defense Intelligence Agency, toured the state to argue that Church is largely responsible for hobbling the CIA. But the debate has sometimes bogged down in personalities. "I had never before called Church a liar," says ABC's Don Todd. "But last summer he compared us to the Nazis, and that's the way it's been since."

Send Them a Signal: Symms himself has been quick to take the offensive. "Certainly, Church has a lot of seniority, but what's he done with it?" he says. "He's weakened the CIA, voted against the B-1 bomber, the neutron warhead and a healthy, two-ocean Navy." If Church is re-elected, he asks, "what is there to signal other liberals that their votes for deficit financing, the division of wealth and less spending on defense are wrong?" After four terms in the House, Symms, 42, says he is "a dove at heart—I just want to be the best-armed dove on the block."

Attacked by both Symms and ABC, Church has spent much of his time fighting off their charges. The B-1 bomber, he explains, costs a lot, yet will not be able to penetrate Soviet defenses by the mid-1980s; he supports the cruise missile instead.

Symms's idea of a strong defense, says Church, is a "knee-jerk vote for every weapons system" regardless of cost or effectiveness. Of his role in the Senate crackdown on intelligence-agency abuses, Church says, he "merely wanted the CIA to distinguish between innocent Americans . . . and the enemies of our country." But he has also criticized Symms's campaign contributions from oilmen* ("Do we need a senator from Exxon?") and challenged his record in the House. "Symms wants Idahoans to compare my record with his? They'll have to find his first," he says. "He has tried to pass over 135 bills since he has been in Congress, and his next one passed will be his first."

In the end, Church's tenure in the Senate may well depend on the bread-and-butter issues that affect his constituents most. Idaho's lumber and mining industries are in a slump, and Symms and the ABC have begun to sound recessionary themes. Citing Church's support for tougher restrictions on the use of Federal land, Todd says, "That's seen as a jobs issue out here. When lumbermen are out of work and miners are looking for jobs, you can't keep shutting off more and more land." The New Right's laissez-faire blitz, Church replies, forces him to convince the voters that "government is not an instrument of the devil"—and that Frank Church is on the side of the angels as well.

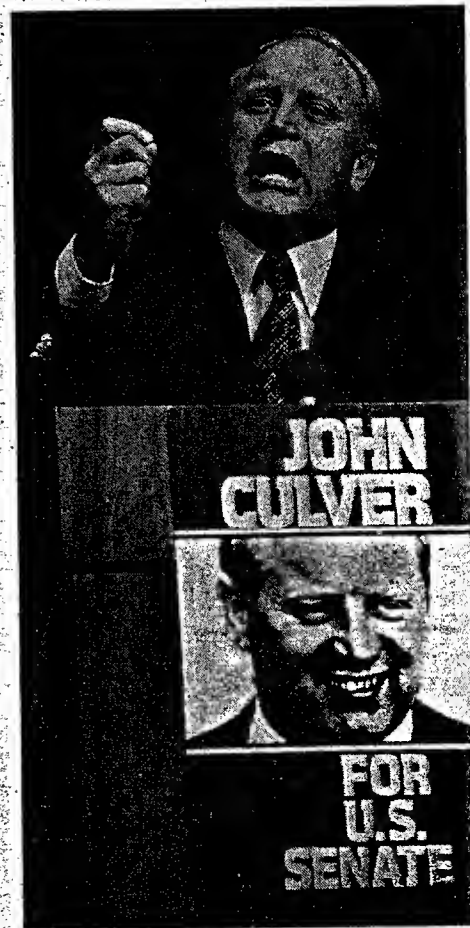
Sweaty and grinning as he harvested handshakes from a packed house, John Culver strode down the aisle at Veterans Memorial Auditorium in Des Moines as if his political life depended on it. Culver, 47, is seeking re-election in a state that shocked liberals two years ago by booting out Sen. Dick Clark in an election marked by a bitter attack on Clark by anti-abortion and other conservative groups. The polls show Culver 9 points down, and he is plainly running scared. "A new species of radical conservatism has been spawned in recent years—with new ideologies, new campaign and fund-raising techniques, and divisive forces that . . . seek to tear down, not build up," he thundered from the podium in Des Moines. "The most dangerous, well organized and lavishly financed of these is the so-called 'New Right' . . . these negative forces must not prevail."

But Iowa's New Right intends to prevail. Culver's opponent in the November election, three-term U.S. Rep. Charles Grassley, 46, is a farm-bred, budget-balancing conservative who is, according to Republican state committeewoman Mary Louise Smith, "in tune with the good, old-fashioned values." He has stumped the state every weekend for more than a year and

*Symms has denied charges of unethical ties to Texas oil and commodities magnate Nelson Bunker Hunt, a campaign contributor. Symms said that he had speculated in silver and commodities futures while a member of a House subcommittee that regulates such trade. But when questioned about it by a reporter, he said he was "not going to waste my time with this kind of drivel, period."

now "has a broad, strong and deep following," Smith says. In the June 3 Republican primary, Grassley easily vanquished moderate Tom Stoner, although Stoner had Gov. Robert Ray's support and a two-to-one advantage in spending. Just as ominous for liberals, turnout in this year's GOP primary was 100,000 votes higher than two years ago—and turnout, everyone agrees, is the key to victory in November.

Shadow Coalition: Grassley stands to benefit from the state GOP's get-out-the-vote drive, and he plans to spend heavily on radio and television ads after Labor Day. But his strength is at the grass roots—a shadow coalition of single-issue groups mo-



© Dana Downie

Culver: A gut fighter running scared

bilizing voters with precisely targeted direct-mail campaigns. "In each county they have representatives from each group—the rifle types, the fundamentalist churches, the pro-lifers," says Jerry Mersener, an aide in the Stoner primary campaign. "They can send a message directly to National Rifle Association members, and we have no chance to respond until days later." Grassley denies that his support is limited to the New Right, and he will stress other issues—from a constitutional amendment to balance the budget to strengthening national defense. "No question that the New Right groups have a lot of popular appeal," says state Republican chairman Steve Rob-

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

erts, "but Grassley's appeal is larger than the New Right."

Culver's counterattack, characteristically, has been frontal and total. "Sure, I'm a liberal," he says. "But I believe I'm in the mainstream on many issues." He is a strong campaigner with a good organization; he has strong labor support, and he is claiming the middle ground against Grassley. Culver has spent \$600,000 on ads that will depict him as a hard-nosed progressive who can represent the state effectively. According to The Des Moines Register, he was effective in making sure that farmers would get priority under the Carter Administration's stand-by gas-rationing plan. And when a fundamentalist group gave him a zero rating on its "morality index," Culver played hardball. Florida Rep. Richard Kelly, he observed, scored 100 per cent on the morality index—although Kelly has been implicated in the ABSCAM bribery scandal. "He destroyed their credibility," says union leader Charles Gifford. "He's a gut fighter. That's John's strong suit, and we're relying on it."

The outlook for fall is a classic confrontation between New Right and Old Left—and despite Grassley's current lead, few are predicting the outcome. Mersener calls it "a political scientist's dream"—a clear-cut struggle between the computerized conservative cadres and the traditional foot soldiers of liberalism. "It's the New Right versus the unions, environmentalists and students," he says. "And both sides think their candidate will save the world if elected."



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Marcello: 'I am not in no racket'

The Brilab Sting Hits a Mafia Don

Carlos Marcello always told people he made his living selling tomatoes. But to the lawmen who have tracked him for the past three decades, he is the godfather of New Orleans, one of the most powerful Mafia capos in the United States. Now 70, the short, pudgy Marcello is said to rule a vast underworld empire that nets more than \$1 billion a year. He has been charged with crimes ranging from robbery to selling narcotics but he has done little jail time.

Last week, however, a Federal grand jury in New Orleans indicted Marcello and three others on charges of racketeering, conspiracy and fraud—and this time, the Feds think they have an airtight case.

The indictment is part of the FBI's sting operation code-named Brilab—for bribery-labor—aimed at exposing corruption among public officials, labor organizations and organized crime in the South and Southwest. A fortnight ago, a Houston grand jury indicted Billy Wayne Clayton, speaker of the Texas House of Representatives, and grand juries in Washington, Los Angeles and Oklahoma City are conducting similar Brilab probes. But Federal officials are particularly pleased with the Marcello indictment. It is the first time they have strong evidence—based largely on tapes from concealed recording devices worn by undercover FBI agents—linking the reputed New Orleans godfather to a major crime.

The FBI agents posed as California insurance brokers seeking to bribe public officials to win government insurance contracts. Through FBI informer Joseph Hauser and Washington lobbyist I. Irving Davidson, the agents contacted Marcello last summer and offered him commissions for helping arrange the bribes. According to the indictment, Marcello directed the team to make a \$25,000 payment to Charles E. Roemer II, then a powerful state commissioner, and a \$10,000 payment to New Orleans lawyer Vincent Marinello, who claimed he gave the money to then-Lt. Gov. James Fitzmorris Jr.* Later, ac-

*Davidson, Roemer and Marinello were indicted along with Marcello. Fitzmorris, who denies receiving the bribe, is still under grand-jury investigation.

The ABSCAM Five

Nearly five months after the ABSCAM scandal broke over Capitol Hill, a Federal grand jury in Brooklyn last week produced two more Congressional indictments. This time, the targets were two Democratic barons of the House: Frank Thompson Jr. of New Jersey, 61, who succeeded Wayne Hays as chairman of the House Administration Committee, and John M. Murphy of New York, 53, chairman of the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee. Both denied wrongdoing. "Investigative agencies and disreputable hirelings in their employ can act in overzealous or illegal ways," Thompson said.

In meetings filmed by the FBI last October, the indictment

alleged, Murphy and Thompson accepted separate \$50,000 bribes from an FBI agent posing as a representative of Arab businessmen who needed help with immigration problems. The bribes were allegedly shared with Philadelphia lawyer Howard L. Criden, who was also indicted, along with another mid-dleman, New Jersey businessman Joseph R. Silvestri.

The month-long series of indictments have ensnared three other House members as well: Michael Myers and Raymond F. Lederer of Pennsylvania and John W. Jenrette Jr. of South Carolina, all Democrats. The evidence against the last two lawmakers named earlier in the scandal, Republican Rep. Richard Kelly of Florida and Democratic Sen. Harrison Williams Jr. of New Jersey, is still before grand juries.

Lederer



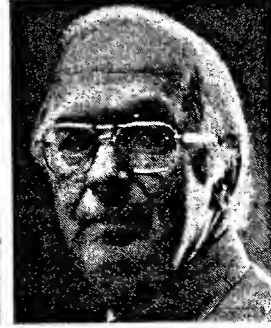
Myers



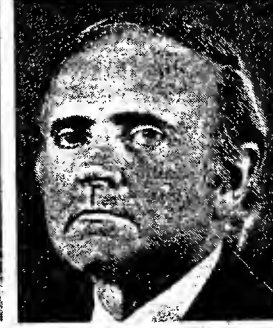
Jenrette



Thompson



Murphy



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